Five Tips for Communicating the Demographic Dividend to Policymakers

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Lesson 1:
Don’t assume people understand the term “demographic dividend”
Harnessing the Demographic Dividend

The ENGAGE Presentation, “Harnessing the Demographic Dividend” aims to improve understanding of the demographic dividend, what it takes to realize that dividend, and the potential for the countries of sub-Saharan Africa to achieve the demographic dividend and associated economic growth.

What is a demographic dividend?

A demographic dividend is the accelerated economic growth that can result from improved reproductive health, a rapid decline in fertility, and the subsequent shift in population age structure. With fewer births each year, a country’s working-age population grows larger relative to the young dependent population. With more people in the force and fewer children to support, a country has a window of opportunity for economic growth.

Lesson 2:
Don’t assume people understand the importance of age structure changes
Dependency ratios

3 HOW DO YOU KNOW IF A COUNTRY IS POISED TO ACHIEVE THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND?

An important way of identifying the window of opportunity for the dividend is the shift in age structure that comes with investments in family planning. This demographic transition,

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SUPPORT RATIO = Effective workers
                Effective consumers
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SOUTH KOREA 1950

MALE
FEMALE

High fertility caused bulges in the youngest age groups.

PERCENT OF TOTAL POPULATION

SOUTH KOREA 1990

MALE
FEMALE

Fertility decline through family planning dramatically increased the size of the working-age population.

PERCENT OF TOTAL POPULATION

Lesson 3:

Be careful about using words expected, assumed, or forthcoming
Mali population projections to 2100

Source: UN World Population Prospects 2015
Lesson 4

Models are powerful policy tools but focus on visualizing the scenarios not on model details.
DemDiv in Uganda

In 2014, HPP partnered with the National Planning Authority (NPA) as it prepared a new report on the demographic dividend in support of Uganda’s Second National Development Plan. HPP worked closely with the NPA and other local stakeholders on the report, using DemDiv to generate three scenarios for Uganda’s economic development. The model projected that if Uganda prioritizes ambitious family planning and education programs together with economic and governance policies, the country could realize a demographic dividend of US$3,500 in GDP per capita by 2040, achieving the Vision 2040 national development plan.

The NPA report was launched and signed by Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni at the country’s first National Family Planning Conference in July 2014. “Family planning is good for the children...for the family welfare, and for the country,” Museveni stated in his comments accompanying the report launch. With birth

Source: Health Policy Project DemDiv Brief 2015
Lesson 5

Be sure to communicate the full spectrum of investments needed, not just a fertility decline, and that the economic gains can be immediate but are not automatic.
Policy Interventions Facilitating a Demographic Dividend

- Population Structure
- Health
- Education
- Economics
- Governance

Enabling Environment

Demographic Dividend